

# E31 - What Must Be Protected

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Translator:

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Timer:

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**[00:05]** ---

Defense! Defense! Defense! Defense!

**[00:13]** ---

We're doin' a player substitution.

**[00:14]** ---

Natsume?

**[00:16]** ---

It's been long enough. I'm good.

**[00:19]** ---

Me, too... I'm ready.

**[00:21]** ---

Shigeyoshi...

**[00:24]** ---

Just stay put!

**[00:26]** ---

If our lead is still shrinking  
after 3 minutes from now,

**[00:29]** ---

then go ahead and put  
Bro or the beanstalk in.

**[00:32]** ---

But until then, I'll find a way  
to hold the other team off.

**[00:36]** ---

Shot-clock violation!

**[00:37]** ---

Huh? Already?!

**[00:40]** ---

Player substitution! Kuzuryu High School!

**[00:47]** ---

Just "hold them off"?

**[00:49]** ---

Not "stretch out our lead even further"?

**[00:56]** ---

It's not wrong

**[00:59] ---**

So that one step you took  
and endured today is

**[01:02] ---**

The sound of a footstep  
that radiates brilliantly

**[01:08] ---**

It's not wrong

**[01:12] ---**

So the world you blindly  
jumped into must be right

**[01:19] ---**

The plans I held for the  
future when I was greedy

**[01:21] ---**

Ahiru no Sora

**[01:25] ---**

Was soiled by my days of  
attentiveness to others

**[01:32] ---**

Those that sought the  
same dream have long ago

**[01:35] ---**

Started on new paths

**[01:38] ---**

Sighs color the sky a dark gray

**[01:44] ---**

But it's not the end yet

**[01:50] ---**

Today must be the day, so I pray as I sing

**[01:59] ---**

It's not wrong

**[02:02] ---**

So that one step you took  
and endured today is

**[02:05] ---**

The sound of a footstep  
that radiates brilliantly

**[02:11] ---**

It's not wrong

**[02:14] ---**

The world you blindly  
jumped into must be right

**[02:23] ---**

What Must Be Protected

**[02:25] ---**

It's a real shame.

**[02:27]** ---

You've got so much amazing talent,

**[02:29]** ---

but not enough stamina to  
run for 40 minutes, huh?

**[02:33]** ---

Wait, let me guess!

**[02:34]** ---

Back in middle school, you  
skipped out on practice thinking

**[02:36]** ---

you were too good for it.

**[02:38]** ---

Just buzz off.

**[02:40]** ---

I'm really purr-ceptive!

**[02:42]** ---

Well, considering that you've been the one  
scoring on us the most,

**[02:45]** ---

it really helps to have you  
get all tuckered out now.

**[02:48]** ---

Uh-oh, better keep your eyes on the prize!

**[02:58]** ---

Going above my head again... dammit!

**[03:03]** ---

Get outta my way, ya big lump!

**[03:05]** ---

Don't you dare, sideburns!

**[03:08]** ---

He's wide open!

**[03:12]** ---

Nobody gets a free shot  
as long as I'm on the court, dammit!

**[03:16]** ---

They stopped it!

**[03:18]** ---

Defensive foul! #4!

**[03:20]** ---

Shit, he got free-throws?

**[03:22]** ---

That was a nice block, Momoharu.

**[03:24]** ---

Thanks.

**[03:26]** ---

I'll run like hell if the second shot misses,

**[03:28]** ---

so chuck the ball as hard as you can.

**[03:30]** ---

Every point counts,  
Kazushi. Don't miss these.

**[03:36]** ---

Two free-throws!

**[03:44]** ---

You talking about Kashiwagi?  
He's bad news, for sure.

**[03:47]** ---

Did you hear? He caused a big brawl.

**[03:49]** ---

What a thug...

**[03:51]** ---

I hate being stuck in the same class as him.

**[04:00]** ---

Oh?

**[04:01]** ---

What's up? You hoping to join the team?

**[04:04]** ---

Wait! You can't let that guy in!

**[04:07]** ---

His name is Kashiwagi and he's done nothing  
but cause trouble lately.

**[04:10]** ---

Whatever, that's nothing a bit  
of old fashion discipline won't cure.

**[04:13]** ---

I guarantee that won't work on him!

**[04:15]** ---

He totally beat the snot out of 3 guys  
from West High the other day.

**[04:18]** ---

Ouch!

**[04:19]** ---

Oops, sorry.

**[04:21]** ---

That hurt, asswipe!

**[04:23]** ---

Sorry, my bad. But you should  
watch where you're going, too.

**[04:27]** ---

Huh?

**[04:32]** ---

If you're interested in playing,  
then why not come join us?

**[04:34]** ---

Huh?

**[04:36]** ---

I know the feeling. I got into basketball  
because of that same manga!

**[04:46]** ---

He missed the first shot!

**[04:48]** ---

Aw, man, they needed that!

**[04:50]** ---

Stay calm, Kazushi!

**[04:51]** ---

Take deep breaths and shoot  
carefully. You'll be fine!

**[04:58]** ---

Back on that fateful day,  
if you hadn't reached out to me like you did...

**[05:04]** ---

...then I'm sure my high school life  
would've been the pits.

**[05:12]** ---

Even a hopeless punk like me  
can find something to be passionate about!

**[05:16]** ---

He missed the second one, too!

**[05:18]** ---

Rebound it! We have to hold them off!

**[05:21]** ---

Dammit!

**[05:24]** ---

Shit, it's a fast break!  
Don't let him pass it!

**[05:33]** ---

Yukio!

**[05:34]** ---

Oh no, Tamo!

**[05:35]** ---

Out of bounds! White team's ball!

**[05:38]** ---

He took Momoharu's full-force  
throw right to the face...

**[05:40]** ---

That's the 10th guy I've seen him  
put out of commission like that.

**[05:43]** ---

For real?!

**[05:45]** ---

Don't die on us, Yukio!

**[05:47]** ---

Say something, Yukio!

**[05:49]** ---

I'm all right. I know how  
to roll with the punches.

**[05:53]** ---

If they scored with a fast break now,

**[05:55]** ---

it would totally kill all the  
momentum that Kazushi built for us.

**[06:01]** ---

How adorable, he's so shy.

**[06:07]** ---

Defense! Defense! Defense! Defense!

**[06:11]** ---

A'ight! We're gonna crush their streak!  
Keep your voices and spirits high!

**[06:16]** ---

We WILL catch up! Nobody call it quits now!

**[06:19]** ---

What is the thing that  
I'm supposed to protect?

**[06:23]** ---

I already abandoned  
basketball once, didn't I?

**[06:26]** ---

Yasuhara, you gotta get further inside!

**[06:28]** ---

So why exactly am I here right now?

**[06:31]** ---

You're going down.

**[06:34]** ---

A three!

**[06:36]** ---

No way!

**[06:41]** ---

It went in!

**[06:42]** ---

A 10 point lead! Now they're  
back in the double digits!

**[06:48]** ---

Eat shit.

**[06:50]** ---

That smug bastard!

**[06:52]** ---

I didn't skip out on practice

because I was lazy. It's just...

**[06:57]** ---

...there was a time I almost  
let go of the precious

**[07:00]** ---

little hand that I was  
supposed to hold tight.

**[07:03]** ---

I won't lose her! Never again!

**[07:06]** ---

There's only 3 minutes left,  
guys! Stay confident and-

**[07:08]** ---

Everybody move up!

**[07:10]** ---

We can't just keep the same defense!  
We gotta lay on more pressure!

**[07:13]** ---

Hey Chucky! Yasuhara! We're  
doing man-to-man now!

**[07:16]** ---

Roger that!

**[07:21]** ---

Kuzu High is going all out!

**[07:22]** ---

They're in the endgame now!

**[07:24]** ---

Oh jeez, that's way too reckless.  
Especially when they have the lead.

**[07:27]** ---

With the players who are on the court now,

**[07:29]** ---

there's hardly any difference  
between zone and man-to-man.

**[07:32]** ---

Well, I suppose this allows  
them to suppress Kojima

**[07:34]** ---

and hope his knee puts him on the bench soon.

**[07:37]** ---

But of course, that's only if  
they have enough stamina left to run at this point.

**[07:42]** ---

Hey, Madoka?

**[07:44]** ---

Uh, yes?

**[07:45]** ---

The one who shot that last three...

**[07:47]** ---

What's the name of that boy  
who has his hair all braided up?

**[07:50]** ---

Oh, uh, that's Kenji Natsume.  
Everyone calls him "Kite," though.

**[07:56]** ---

He's in the same grade as Sora.

**[07:58]** ---

Is he really just a  
freshman? He's so skilled!

**[08:02]** ---

There was a lot of trouble  
leading up to him joining the team, though.

**[08:05]** ---

What about that other one?  
The boy who made the amazing block.

**[08:08]** ---

Momoharu Hanazono. He's the  
team captain and center.

**[08:11]** ---

He's actually twins with the afro boy  
who's sitting on the bench now.

**[08:15]** ---

That one's name is Chiaki Hanazono,  
he's the point guard.

**[08:19]** ---

They don't look very similar...

**[08:20]** ---

And then, the really tall boy  
is Kaname Shigeyoshi. He's also a freshman.

**[08:26]** ---

Wow!

**[08:27]** ---

That's all of 'em!

**[08:32]** ---

Uh-oh, they got by Sora!

**[08:34]** ---

My legs...!

**[08:36]** ---

Another basket for us!

**[08:38]** ---

I said we should switch our defense,  
but then I let them get right by me.

**[08:42]** ---

Kite's gonna be so pissed...

**[08:44]** ---

Don't sweat it.

**[08:46]** ---

I wouldn't be surprised if they came at us  
with a full-court press anytime now.

**[08:50]** ---

These final 3 minutes are when you gotta show them  
what a point guard can really do.

**[08:54]** ---

Throw me some good passes.

**[08:56]** ---

Right!

**[08:58]** ---

So, Kite and Shigeyoshi.

**[09:00]** ---

Momoharu and Chiaki.

**[09:02]** ---

And then Yasuhara, Nabeshima, and Saki.

**[09:06]** ---

Finally, little Nao.

**[09:07]** ---

Okay, I'll remember them!

**[09:09]** ---

Ms. Yuka, are you doing all right?  
You're starting to look sweaty...

**[09:13]** ---

Well, all the excitement  
is making it hot in here.

**[09:19]** ---

We need to start laying on defensive pressure,  
or else it'll be too late.

**[09:23]** ---

But... it's not realistic for us to do  
a full-court press with Koji's leg.

**[09:27]** ---

We have to find another way to...

**[09:30]** ---

No skin off my bones!

**[09:32]** ---

Koji?

**[09:33]** ---

Just take a good look at their faces.

**[09:36]** ---

We had them running their  
asses off in the first half,

**[09:38]** ---

so there's no way they'll

last the full 40 minutes.

**[09:40]** ---

A lion with a busted leg or  
a bunch of weak-ass rabbits.

**[09:43]** ---

Who do you think is gonna get eaten?

**[09:46]** ---

They both seem helpless to me.

**[09:48]** ---

And rabbits are herbivores, anyway.

**[09:50]** ---

Either way, it's all over  
for us if we lose here.

**[09:54]** ---

Save the complaining for  
after we win this damn thing.

**[09:58]** ---

Regrets and sacrifices. I've dealt with  
enough of those to hate both of them.

**[10:03]** ---

Maybe the only thing that  
we get out of winning...

**[10:06]** ---

is small and cheap in the long run.

**[10:10]** ---

But even so, all we can do  
is keep striving for it.

**[10:13]** ---

Not good!

**[10:14]** ---

Miss, miss, miss!

**[10:17]** ---

Go in!

**[10:17]** ---

Go in, go in, go in!

**[10:19]** ---

Miss!

**[10:20]** ---

Go in!

**[10:27]** ---

Counterattack!

**[10:29]** ---

Never missing a shot! Being  
the fastest man on the court!

**[10:33]** ---

For a small player like myself...

**[10:37]** ---

...that's the only way to stay alive!

**[10:40]** ---

I want to be useful to the team!

**[10:45]** ---

Reach, reach!

**[10:47]** ---

REACH!

**[10:54]** ---

A 6-point gap!

**[10:56]** ---

We're almost there!

**[10:57]** ---

Ka-Kashiwagi!

**[11:08]** ---

Kurumatani!

**[11:11]** ---

Uh-oh...

**[11:13]** ---

They've closed the gap even further now.

We have to widen it back up.

**[11:16]** ---

10 points... no, is it 8 points now?

**[11:20]** ---

I've gotta protect our lead...

how many minutes left?

**[11:24]** ---

Huh? Someone is... calling my name...

**[11:27]** ---

What's wrong with me? Everything

feels... so far away...

**[11:31]** ---

Have to protect it... have to protect it...

**[11:37]** ---

You did well out there. Leave the rest to me.

**[11:41]** ---

Chiaki...

**[11:47]** ---

That #7 with 4 fouls is coming back in.

**[11:50]** ---

And now, there's no way of telling

how this match will play out.

**[11:53]** ---

Feh, pathetic!

**[11:55]** ---

They've only got 3 subs on the bench.

**[11:57]** ---

This situation was unavoidable for them.

**[11:59]** ---

There's less than 3 minutes left now,

**[12:02]** ---

but that's still too much time to  
defend a 6 point lead to the end.

**[12:05]** ---

And even if they do manage to win,  
this is still just the first round.

**[12:09]** ---

Let me tell you something.  
These guys don't have a future.

**[12:14]** ---

There's no way a team like this  
can make it anywhere near the top.

**[12:19]** ---

She must be worried about Sora.  
It doesn't look like he got injured, though.

**[12:24]** ---

Um, I'm going down to have a closer look.

**[12:27]** ---

I'll check and see if Sora's  
okay. I won't be gone long!

**[12:30]** ---

Stupid...

**[12:31]** ---

Huh?

**[12:32]** ---

That stupid blockhead!

**[12:34]** ---

Huh?!

**[12:35]** ---

Can't even last for 40 minutes...!

**[12:38]** ---

He should know better, I always  
said that practicing for

**[12:40]** ---

lengthy runs is absolutely  
vital in basketball!

**[12:43]** ---

Studying for school entrance exams  
must have made him slack off!

**[12:46]** ---

I think that's pretty  
ordinary for every kid...

**[12:51]** ---

He can't afford to be ordinary.

**[12:53]** ---

Huh?

**[12:54]** ---

It's just like Sakam... ahem,  
Mr. Sakamaki was saying earlier.

**[12:58]** ---

It would basically take a  
miracle for Sora to get on the

**[13:01]** ---

starting lineup of most any team.

**[13:02]** ---

And it's not just him,

**[13:04]** ---

every shorter player inevitably  
comes up against that same hurdle.

**[13:08]** ---

If Sora wants to secure his  
own place on the court,

**[13:12]** ---

then he can't just do  
the same things everyone else does.

**[13:15]** ---

Although, I know fully well  
that he won't discover

**[13:19]** ---

what he should do all by himself.

**[13:23]** ---

Then you should focus on getting better,

**[13:26]** ---

so you can come to Kuzu High and  
become their coach, Ms. Yuka.

**[13:29]** ---

Huh?

**[13:30]** ---

Both our boys' and girls' basketball teams  
don't have a proper coach.

**[13:34]** ---

Our advisors are just math  
and history teachers.

**[13:37]** ---

The boys' team has Nao serving  
as both manager and coach, but...

**[13:41]** ---

There's a limit to what she can do on her own

**[13:43]** ---

and she's been very frank about her concerns.

**[13:47]** ---

If Sora and his team are serious

about aiming for the top,

**[13:50]** ---

then they need a good coach to lead them.

**[13:53]** ---

If you could come to our school  
and do that, Ms. Yuka...

**[13:55]** ---

Uh, well... the girls' team  
would love to learn from you, too!

**[14:00]** ---

So please, do everything you  
can to start feeling better!

**[14:05]** ---

Me? A coach?

**[14:08]** ---

I think it's a great idea.  
You should take them up on it.

**[14:12]** ---

But I...

**[14:16]** ---

The future is built on hope.

**[14:19]** ---

And hope is born from life.

**[14:22]** ---

As long as you strive for a dream,  
then tomorrow will come.

**[14:29]** ---

The job given to us adults  
is to protect the future of all the kids.

**[14:36]** ---

Listen up, boys.

**[14:40]** ---

We've all lost sight of hope  
once in our lives already.

**[14:44]** ---

We had no place to belong,

**[14:46]** ---

and spent a year without  
knowing what we wanted to do.

**[14:50]** ---

To be real with you,

**[14:52]** ---

there's no guarantee that winning this  
match will change anything for us.

**[14:57]** ---

However!

**[14:59]** ---

We know for sure nothing  
will change unless we win.

**[15:03]** ---

Take this to heart. The lead we have now  
represents our future!

**[15:08]** ---

Defend it with your very lives!

**[15:38]** ---

Hey, Bro! Be careful with those fouls.

**[15:40]** ---

You think the threat of ejection  
is enough to scare me?

**[15:43]** ---

He's a damn good guard.

**[15:45]** ---

Now I'm getting pumped!

**[15:47]** ---

They've rallied up some morale.

**[15:49]** ---

Their team must trust that #7 wholeheartedly.

**[15:52]** ---

And that #15, too. I gotta admit,  
they're a real solid team.

**[15:59]** ---

Okay, let's do this! Time  
for the final battle!

**[16:02]** ---

Excuse me, Fujita? The girls' team  
is about to start their game.

**[16:06]** ---

All right, let's go.

**[16:07]** ---

What? Aren't we gonna watch the end?

**[16:09]** ---

Regardless of which team wins,  
it doesn't change what we must do.

**[16:14]** ---

Good point.

**[16:20]** ---

Say, Mokichi. How big is our lead?

**[16:24]** ---

8 points.

**[16:26]** ---

And now, it's down to 6 points.

**[16:29]** ---

Do you think we'll win?

**[16:31]** ---

Yeah... well, I'm not so sure.

**[16:35]** ---

It really kills me.

**[16:37]** ---

If only I could move as fast as Kite does...

**[16:40]** ---

If only I could jump as  
high as Momoharu does...

**[16:43]** ---

If only I could pass as  
well as Chiaki does...

**[16:48]** ---

If only I could grow as  
tall as you are, Mokichi...

**[16:53]** ---

Hey, Kurumatani.

**[16:55]** ---

Do you remember the conversation we had...  
when we first met?

**[17:00]** ---

You said you were jealous of me.

**[17:03]** ---

And then I replied by saying  
I was jealous of you.

**[17:08]** ---

Ever since the day I first started basketball,  
I've always played center.

**[17:13]** ---

I was never allowed to experiment  
with other positions, even if I wanted to.

**[17:17]** ---

But what I've always dreamed of...

**[17:20]** ---

...was to become an all-rounder,  
like that guy is.

**[17:25]** ---

Mokichi...

**[17:26]** ---

From now on, as you keep growing taller,

**[17:29]** ---

you'll find yourself able to  
play a variety of positions.

**[17:33]** ---

And then, you'll eventually reach it.

**[17:35]** ---

The peak of what a basketball player can be.

**[17:39]** ---

You are full of nothing but potential.

**[17:42]** ---

And that... is what I'm jealous of.

**[17:46]** ---

But it's okay. I'm not giving up.

**[17:50]** ---

"Potential"...

**[17:55]** ---

Defensive foul! #6!

**[17:56]** ---

Sweet!

**[17:57]** ---

Time for free-throws!

**[18:01]** ---

S-sorry, you guys!

**[18:03]** ---

It happens. Shake it off!

**[18:05]** ---

Nice, Roku!

**[18:06]** ---

Thanks.

**[18:09]** ---

Player substitution, Kuzuryu High School!

**[18:11]** ---

Shigeyoshi!

**[18:12]** ---

Right. I know.

**[18:18]** ---

Just 1 minute left! Here  
comes the giant once again!

**[18:22]** ---

I dragged us down out there.  
And at such a crucial time...

**[18:25]** ---

If we end up losing now, it's  
basically gonna be my fault!

**[18:29]** ---

Senpai.

**[18:30]** ---

Huh?

**[18:30]** ---

Your defense... was solid.

**[18:36]** ---

You can drop the act!

**[18:38]** ---

I can't dribble and I can't shoot,  
so I know I'm not worth shit out there!

**[18:42]** ---

I get it...

**[18:43]** ---

He wasn't being sarcastic.

**[18:45]** ---

Our team doesn't have  
anybody who would be at a time like this!

**[18:49]** ---

Goddammit!

**[18:51]** ---

Don't be so impatient, Chucky.

**[18:53]** ---

What lies beyond this line is  
like a holy ground of sorts.

**[18:56]** ---

It's a battlefield where only those

**[18:58]** ---

who've spent years  
of intense training are allowed to fight.

**[19:03]** ---

That's more or less how I see it.

**[19:06]** ---

Half-assed guys like us could never compete  
on the same level as them.

**[19:13]** ---

Well, that's what the old me  
would say and then give up.

**[19:16]** ---

But after watching how Chiaki and Kite  
played in this game, I felt motivated.

**[19:21]** ---

Nabe...

**[19:23]** ---

I wanna pull off sick  
moves just like they do.

**[19:25]** ---

Then turn around and have them say to me...

**[19:28]** ---

"Nice job, Nabe!" and get  
showered with their praise.

**[19:29]** ---

You're the best, Nabe!

**[19:31]** ---

Way to go, dude.

**[19:32]** ---

Not half-bad.

**[19:33]** ---

You've got skills!

**[19:34]** ---

I've been bested.

**[19:35]** ---

I'm in love...

**[19:37]** ---

Totally.

**[19:40]** ---

It'd be nice to actually be  
of some use someday, huh?

**[19:43]** ---

Yeah.

**[19:46]** ---

He sunk it!

**[19:47]** ---

Now we're only 5 points behind!

**[19:49]** ---

Don't miss this.

**[19:50]** ---

Sink it or get an ass whoopin'!

**[19:53]** ---

When I found out this team only  
had 2 members at the start,

**[19:55]** ---

I thought they were out of their minds.

**[19:59]** ---

But now, I can't help but feel driven...  
to keep playing with them!

**[20:06]** ---

Go in! Please go in!

**[20:15]** ---

OMG, I'm totally starting to cry right now!

**[20:18]** ---

Me, too!

**[20:19]** ---

This match is so crazy...  
it's rare to ever see two teams go at it like this!

**[21:06]** ---

Are you sure? You don't  
want to see how it ends?

**[21:10]** ---

I was already cheating by  
going in the first place.

**[21:13]** ---

"Cheating"?

**[21:13]** ---

Even though I went, I still want to hear my son  
tell me the results himself.

**[21:18]** ---

In any case, I'm surprised you went  
without seeing him for so long.

**[21:22]** ---

I'm sorry that we had to  
impose on you like this.

**[21:24]** ---

It's okay.

**[21:28]** ---

Doctor...

**[21:31]** ---

At the arena, my old college friend...  
he gave me the same advice you once did.

**[21:38]** ---

That having hope and dreams  
breathes life into us.

**[21:42]** ---

That the importance of life is found  
in the precious things we protect.

**[21:49]** ---

Doctor... I did it...

**[21:54]** ---

I found a dream that... I want to pursue.

**[22:01]** ---

I want to convey them to you

**[22:04]** ---

Lay all of my feelings bare

**[22:07]** ---

Whether I have to lie or sin,  
I just want you to smile

**[22:14]** ---

By using these wings that you gave me

**[22:17]** ---

And embracing the "promise"  
that ties us together

**[22:19]** ---

I'll stretch up to the sky!

**[22:23]** ---

Towards where only light shines

**[22:28]** ---

I was suffocating myself

**[22:34]** ---

In the empty corner of a cage

**[22:38]** ---

Yeah... it was as if

**[22:39]** ---

"I'm just like a bird that can't fly"

**[22:43]** ---

I nearly locked myself  
in with all the excuses

**[22:49]** ---

I want to change

**[22:51]** ---

I cannot change

**[22:52]** ---

Even if I become stained in lies

**[22:55]** ---

I want to fall apart

**[22:56]** ---

I cannot fall apart

**[22:58]** ---

Now... I set flight

**[23:01]** ---

Sailing into the open sky

**[23:03]** ---

On these ugly wings

**[23:06]** ---

To assure I never go through  
the same pain again

**[23:13]** ---

Still so very fragile and ephemeral

**[23:16]** ---

But no matter how dirty or pathetic

**[23:19]** ---

I'll fight! I'll rise!

**[23:22]** ---

Towards where there is a tiny glimmer

**[23:31]** ---

Ahiru no Sora

**[23:31]** ---

Next episode: "Time limit."

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